

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 7014

By Barker

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Don Thornton upon the occasion of his retirement as City Manager of Union City.

WHEREAS, this legislative body is pleased to recognize the contributions of those Tennesseans who, throughout their working careers and years of public service, have made significant contributions to their communities and have provided outstanding leadership while improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Don Thornton is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; throughout his exemplary tenure as City Manager of Union City, he proved himself to be a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and an exceptional asset to his community; and

WHEREAS, after thirty-years of sterling service to Union City, which made him the longest serving city manager in the State, Mr. Thornton has recently taken a well deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, a native of Union City, Don Thornton is a graduate of University of Tennessee-Martin, having earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Management from that esteemed institution; and

WHEREAS, a former foreman with the Brown Shoe Company, Mr. Thornton held a number of sales jobs prior to discovering his passion for city management in 1979, including time spent selling life and health insurance, in addition to working as a city police dispatcher and office manager while finishing his college degree; and

WHEREAS, in his new job as city manager, Don Thornton quickly displayed the outstanding qualities of modesty, fairness, integrity, and unsurpassed work ethic that would define his thirty-years of service to the good people of Union City; and

WHEREAS, included among Don Thornton's long list of accomplishments are the installation of the first wastewater treatment plant in 1986 with renovations, improvements, and upgrades in 1994, 1997, 2003, and 2008, as well as a major renovation of the water system in 1997 with various improvements and additions, as well as replacement of water tanks; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thornton was instrumental in the expansion of job opportunities and economic development in Union City, landing the Tyson Foods plant, Obion County's second largest employer, in 1997, and purchasing the 550-acre tract that became Northwest Tennessee Regional Industrial Park in 2007, the home of Greenfield Products, as well as initiating the development of Discovery Park America; and

WHEREAS, a hallmark of Don Thornton's tenure has been his constant search for new and innovative ways to make government work smarter and become more cost-efficient, such as the addition of the award-winning Turf Management department in 2005, and the building of the Vocational Rehabilitation Center in 2002 and East-Side Elementary School in 2000; and

WHEREAS, Don Thornton, a gentleman and a scholar, has more than met the challenge of successfully running a city government, while constantly striving to maintain those services that benefit the common interest of the community. Proving himself to be an effective leader with remarkable vision, Mr. Thornton has gained the respect of council members, community members, city employees, and other city managers; and

WHEREAS, greatly admired and respected by his peers across the State of Tennessee, Don Thornton is a former president of the Tennessee City Management Association and served fifteen years as a member of the Tennessee Municipal League's Risk Management Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thornton epitomizes the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; his meritorious service to the City notwithstanding, Don Thornton is most grateful for the constant love and support of his wife, Veronica; and

WHEREAS, though he will undoubtedly be missed by his many colleagues across the state and the employees of Union City, Don Thornton plans to enjoy his retirement by developing some hobbies and tackling those jobs his wife has reserved especially for him on her "honey-do" list; and

WHEREAS, wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," Don Thornton's dedication to progress, his foresight, and his boundless energy have tendered a profound, positive impact upon the lives of the people of Union City, and he is worthy of much praise and approbation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Don Thornton in recognition of his thirty years of meritorious service as City Manager of Union City, extend our sincerest gratitude for his inspiring leadership and all of his good works within the community, and offer our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement as well as every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.